

THE "SPOUTER"

By George Elmer Cobb

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"You've got to go to work, sir!" declared old Ezra Porter stormily.

"You haven't raised me to work and I don't know how to do it," replied his nephew and heir, Ronald Dunstan, not impertinently, yet with a shade of defiance in his tone.

"Then what did you waste five years on an education for?" snarled the irate old man.

"General knowledge and training," replied Ronald calmly. "It led to my winning the prize in oratory. I came to you the finished article and told you my bent. You wouldn't have it. Your heart is set on my being a physician. Why, sir, I'd break down at the first patient! I can't bear the sight of pain and distress."

"All right, then," berated Mr. Porter, "start out and earn your own living. Until you do, I disown you."

"I shall have to do that, I fear, since you insist upon it," observed Donald in his usual smiling, imperturbable way. "It may be hard at the start, for your kindness has spoiled me, but I will try and keep respectable."

"Ugh!" growled the old tyro, fairly wrathful because he could not frighten this independent young man into becoming humbly. "As a penniless adventurer, I hope you will not have the preemption to continue your attentions to Miss Delevan."

"Oh, Constance?" intimated Ronald, and actually looked happy and hopeful, and old Ezra thrashed around anew at this further exasperating evidence of the perfect confidence of his nephew in himself and the future. "Why, sir, we are engaged."

"Her father will settle that. For the last time—the medical profession?"

"Never."

"Then the book is closed?"

"With a characteristic slam of your

right royal and powerful honest old first, my dear uncle," railed Ronald. "The world is wide. I'll hit something."

"You'll hit poverty and disgrace, young man!" blustered Ezra Porter. "I'm through with you."

It was pretty lonesome for the old man when he saw the last of his irrepressible relative going down the road, whistling cheerily and waving



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his hand back at his old home, smiling as brightly as though its owner was sending him off on a well-financed pleasure trip around the world.

Then he went down to the counterpart of his own fine mansion, the home of the Delevans. He evaded pretty, anxious Constance, who gave him a pleading, reproachful look. To her father he said confidentially:

"I hope you see the necessity and